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SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR DCI

1. Moscow's current policy toward the US is to maximize pressures on the administration during an election year to extract concessions, especially in arms control.

- The basic Soviet aim -- admittedly a long shot -- is to deflect the Reagan Administration from its main foreign policy course of rearmament and tough competition with the USSR.
- 1984 offers their best, perhaps last, chance to do this.

2. But they have not, repeat NOT, made any fundamental decisions to change their own basic policies to mitigate the competition yet. The notion that the Soviets are at a basic turning point of policy because of Chernenko is mistaken.

- a. They were moving toward more tactical flexibility before Chernenko acceded to power.
- b. Even if Chernenko is more powerful than he sometimes looks, the leadership is not in shape to make a major departure from the strategies of the past decade.
  - Remember, on things that matter most to the US, Andropov was not that different from Brezhnev.
- c. The Soviets have no reason to embrace a fixed view of the US now. In the Soviet view ...
  - Reagan will probably be reelected, but it's not certain.
  - Even if he is reelected, economic and political realities are likely to make his reach greater than his grasp in defense and foreign policy during a second term.
- d. The Soviets are very unlikely to hold the view that "it's better to strike a deal before the election than after."
  - It will be impossible to sign, much less ratify, a major "agreement" e.g., INF, before the election.
  - The appearance of a deal-in-the-offing would probably help the President's reelection prospects, something which the Soviets do not want to do, according to all our sources.
  - Soviets would see a high risk that a reelected Reagan administration would break away from a pre-election agreement in principle.

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3. They want to create the appearance, particularly to the top levels of the USG, that they are ready for "a deal." But they are not yet ready on their own part for the concessions necessary to make "a deal" of real or lasting value for the US.

-- This accounts for the faintest hints of reasonableness in some public statements (recently turned hard again) and private encouragement from Dobrynin on prospects for relations.

4. Even this narrow tactical purpose on the Soviet part, however, makes them willing to engage in an arms-length minuet.

-- This offers the US the opportunity to create the image of slight improvement in US/Soviet relations, of benefit to us with allies and publics.

-- The risk for the US is that the Soviets -- having a more disciplined system -- will manipulate us more effectively than we manipulate them.

5. Given the Soviet tactical interest, we can probably keep alive their willingness to engage in exploratory dialogue, at least to the extent seen since January, without major concessions on START, INF, and other areas where we are far apart (e.g., ASAT, Chemical Weapons).

-- A cautious US approach would concentrate on CBMs (e.g., HOTLINE) and peripheral issues ... at least for some months.

6. To get more dramatic movement we probably have to consider more costly concessions. The crucial concession the Soviets are clearly looking for is a moratorium on INF deployments.

-- The Soviets believe that an INF moratorium, and perhaps just talk about a moratorium, could rekindle the INF controversy in Europe and stop further US deployments permanently.

7. During the election, the Soviets will try to create an atmosphere in which the two US candidates compete in terms of who can better create amity with Moscow.

-- This will create pressure for US concessions.

8. If the US holds firm during a period of maximum political "vulnerability", i.e., 1984, this will go a long way to creating the conditions for a more genuinely flexible Soviet posture in 1985-1988.

-- During the latter period US political freedom of movement will be greater.

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- The results of our defense programs will begin to show.
- A stronger Soviet political leadership with better prospects for longevity may emerge and be better equipped to engage in longer-term planning and genuine give-and-take.

10. Throughout 1984 we have to remember the supreme importance of preserving the kind of credibility in Moscow that would allow us to manage a real crisis which could blow up at any time, e.g., in the Gulf.

- It would be dangerous to create the illusion in Moscow that the US cannot for political reasons risk a worsening of relations such a crisis could entail.

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